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SITUATION AND NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND WOMEN IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE AND THE NEW INDEPENDENT STATES: UNICEF PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES IN 1992

SUMMARY

In response to Executive Board decisions 1990/5 (E/ICEF/1990/13), 1991/20 (E/ICEF/1991/15) and 1992/19 (E/ICEF/1992/14), the present paper reports on UNICEF activities in Central and Eastern Europe and the new independent States. Chapter I outlines the UNICEF mandate and framework for action. Political, economic and social developments in the region, including the needs of women and children, are reported in chapter II. Chapter III details collaboration with agencies of the United Nations system. In chapter IV, the activities relating to advocacy, policy, development, planning for children, country programme preparations and emergency responses, which have been undertaken by UNICEF in partnership with others, are discussed. Chapter V briefly highlights some of the lessons learned and points to challenges faced by UNICEF during the coming years.

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I. THE UNICEF MANDATE AND FRAMEWORK OF ACTION

1. In the wake of the momentous changes in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989, the UNICEF secretariat presented an information note to the 1990 Executive Board concerning the situation of children in the region (E/ICEF/1990/CRP.4). The Board approved an initial commitment of funds to assess the issues involved and to examine the organization's potential, though limited, involvement (E/ICEF/1990/13, decision 1990/5).

2. One year later, in April 1991, the Executive Board discussed the plight of children in Central and Eastern Europe and expressed serious concern about the severe consequences for children of the rapid political, social and economic transformations taking place in these countries. As a result, the Board allocated $1 million and requested UNICEF to undertake a programme of activities on behalf of children (E/ICEF/1991/15, decision 1991/20), including support for:

(a) The development of child-focused policies in the context of the move to market economies;

(b) The policies and development of low-cost services for health, nutrition, water supply, sanitation and basic education, which draw on UNICEF experience in other parts of the world;

(c) The preparation of situation analyses and national programmes of action (NPAs).

3. Concern for children in the region was intensified in December 1991 with the collapse of the Soviet Union. The rapid economic and social disintegration which followed in the new independent States put an estimated 90 million children at risk of deteriorating health conditions. In February 1992, UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO), with the participation of the United Nations Population Fund, the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Development Programme, led missions to 14 of the former republics. The missions reported a "looming human crisis" bearing particularly heavily on women and children throughout the area.

4. At its 1992 session, the Executive Board authorized UNICEF to continue its programme of support for advocacy, analytical studies for policy development and emergency assistance to countries in Central and Eastern Europe and to extend this support to the new independent States (E/ICEF/1992/14, decision 1992/19). The Board emphasized that all activities should be carried out in close collaboration with relevant specialized agencies of the United Nations and other organizations.

5. In response to growing needs and in recognition of the increasing number of countries in the region (from 7 to 26), the Executive Board earmarked an additional $1 million for 1992, and $2 million per year for 1993 and 1994. In addition, the Board approved the development of programmes of assistance to be financed from general resources and through supplementary funding in countries meeting UNICEF criteria for regular programme support. These were: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

6. Following the Board decision, UNICEF fielded assessment and programme development missions to these "qualifying" countries to assist Governments in the preparation of country programmes of cooperation. Two-year "bridging" programmes of assistance for children and women were prepared in late 1992 and are being presented to the 1993 Executive Board. The bridging period will allow the preparation of regular five-year programmes to be submitted to the Board in 1995. A recommendation for continued cooperation financed from supplementary funds is also being presented for Romania, where a programme of emergency activities has been under way since 1991.

7. The 1992 Board also adopted a separate decision on victims of the Chernobyl disaster (E/ICEF/1992/14, decision 1992/20), requesting UNICEF to continue to provide, in coordination with other United Nations agencies, appropriate support to children and mothers who are victims of that disaster.

II. POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE REGION

8. The transition to market-oriented economies taking place in Central and Eastern Europe and the new independent States is unprecedented in both scope and impact. The transition has been marked by rapid, unpredictable and often violent and chaotic social transformation. Resurgent nationalism, separatism, minority conflicts, border disputes and mass migration have all occurred in various countries. Such events and movements are compounded by the devastating environmental degradation in the region.

9. UNICEF involvement in Central and Eastern Europe and the new independent States has come about at a time when accepted ways of thinking and patterns of authority and responsibility are being challenged. Old systems of social welfare and the provision of services for women and children are threatened not only by economic decline, but also by the new value systems and priorities emerging as societies adapt to new economic and political realities. Under pressure to bring about far-reaching social and political changes in their countries, Governments, politicians and decision makers too often neglect the interests and needs of the vulnerable groups in their societies.

A. Central and Eastern Europe

10. In Central and Eastern Europe, economic reform has proven to be slower, more difficult and costlier than expected. Furthermore, recession and sharp declines in production have affected virtually all countries in the region. The sharp contraction in output initiated in these countries continued at a slightly slower pace in 1992, the year for which an overall decline of almost 10 per cent in gross domestic product was recorded.

11. The considerable drop in real wages, pensions and social benefits (including cash transfers to children), the rise in the cost of living and the steady increase in unemployment have already caused, and continue to cause, a massive increase in poverty and growing social tension. Such tension may lead to gradual or abrupt abandonment of the "shock therapy" programmes launched in 1990 and 1991. Of particular gravity is the spread of unemployment, which has well surpassed the 10 per cent mark in Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Poland,

and is rapidly reaching that level in other countries of the region. This is expected to double in some countries over the next two years with further closure of inefficient enterprises.

12. In view of the unexpected magnitude and duration of this transition, the future is uncertain and there is considerable question about when the standard of living of large sections of the population will improve on a sustained basis. While the rate of inflation and domestic macroeconomic imbalances have started to stabilize in some of the countries with early reform (Hungary and Poland), the overall economic outlook for 1993 and beyond remains severely clouded by the continued economic stagnation in the countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, by the economic chaos in the former Soviet Union and by serious internal turmoil in several countries of former Yugoslavia.

B. The new independent States

13. During the past year, the 15 republics of the former Soviet Union, with a population of over 300 million, have engaged in major efforts to develop new political structures and to effect far-reaching economic reforms. Their performance in stabilizing their economies and in implementing structural and sectoral reforms has varied widely. In general, the costs of the transition, thus far, remain very high.

14. The fall in economic activity in the region is without precedent in industrialized countries. The republics of the former Soviet Union experienced a decline of about 15 per cent in output in 1992, following a contraction of 17 per cent in 1991 that affected almost all industrial and agricultural sectors, including the production of meat, milk and other dietary staples.

15. In many of the new independent States, the sharp decline in output in 1992 and 1993 was associated with the collapse of trade and payment systems arranged by the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and the breakup of traditional ties within the economy of the former Soviet Union. Natural disasters and civil strife also contributed to the substantial drop in output, most notably in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Tajikistan.

16. For the majority of these countries the situation has also been aggravated by a deterioration in the terms of trade associated with the shift to world market prices, especially for imported energy. Chronic shortages of foreign currency reserves have considerably reduced investments in industrial and social sectors, as well as the capacity of Governments to purchase food, medical equipment, pharmaceuticals and consumer goods. Between January and July 1992, total exports from the former republics fell by 35 per cent and imports fell by 22 per cent.

17. With rapidly rising inflation, real family incomes have fallen considerably in all of the republics, and continue to fall. By August 1992, the aggregated retail price index on consumer goods and services in the new independent States rose roughly 10 times as compared with August 1991. Costs of preschool education increased 10 times in Kyrgyzstan and 18 times in Moldova.

18. In November 1992, the statistics office of the new independent States revealed that many Russians are on the "brink of physical survival", with one third of Russia's 149 million persons earning less than a minimum consumer budget of 2,000 roubles per month. A poll conducted in Moscow in July 1992 showed that at least 38 per cent of inhabitants, especially the most vulnerable, have been forced to reduce their daily food consumption considerably. At the same time, severe budget constraints are now forcing Governments to eliminate remaining subsidies on bread, milk and other basic daily goods. Rapidly increasing prices, contraction of local production, reduction of imports and fear of inflation by the population have caused chronic shortages of basic consumer items in many regions.

19. The growing economic crisis is causing especially severe hardship for the most vulnerable populations of these countries - children, women and the elderly. Children are facing another winter without adequate safety nets.

III. COLLABORATION WITH AGENCIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

20. As will be described more fully in chapter IV, most UNICEF-assisted activities are being or have been carried out in partnership with other agencies of the United Nations system and with international, bilateral and non-governmental organizations. This principle of partnership reflects both the United Nations new emphasis on a coordinated strategy and the recognition that even with its limited resources, UNICEF can facilitate and enhance the effectiveness of national and international partners.

21. In qualifying countries where UNICEF programmes of assistance are being developed, they will, as noted in the country programme recommendations, be undertaken within the framework of an integrated United Nations systems approach and presence. In non-qualifying countries, UNICEF will seek to work within this framework to facilitate information exchange and promote advocacy activities. Close coordination will be maintained with the Secretary-General's representative and other United Nations agencies, while maintaining clear lines of responsibility and accountability. Emergency responses are implemented within the framework of consolidated appeals and consolidated plans of action.

22. UNICEF is collaborating with WHO on a number of activities, including technical meetings and workshops, and on the development of a clearing-house for medical assistance. A joint UNICEF/WHO consultation with the Ministers of Health in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan was held in December 1992 to review the immediate and medium-term health care needs of these countries.

23. At the Tokyo Coordinating Conference on Humanitarian Assistance to the new independent States, held in October 1992 and hosted by the Government of Japan (a follow-up to the Washington and Lisbon coordinating meetings), UNICEF participated as a member of the United Nations unified delegation led by the Director-General of WHO. The five working groups on energy, food, medicine, shelter and technical assistance, which were established at the Washington conference in January 1992, presented their reports and concluded that new follow-up mechanisms should be established through consultative group meetings led by the World Bank.

24. UNICEF has participated in joint missions which have resulted in inter-agency appeals through the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and the former Yugoslavia. Contacts with United Nations staff in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine and Uzbekistan have been initiated and will be closely pursued at the country level. In Albania and Romania, UNICEF-supported emergency activities are being carried out in close collaboration with other United Nations agencies.

25. In Istanbul, in November 1992, the Government of Turkey, in collaboration with WHO, held the First Health Congress of Turkish Republics. Representatives from UNICEF and the Governments of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan reviewed health problems and their potential solutions.

26. Collaboration with the World Bank programmes in the new independent States has been initiated though a number of workshops and discussions. In Romania, the UNICEF representative is working closely with the World Bank to facilitate the procurement of Bank-financed pharmaceuticals through the UNICEF Supply Division warehouse at Copenhagen.

IV. ACTIVITIES IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE AND THE NEW INDEPENDENT STATES: UNICEF IN PARTNERSHIP

A. Advocacy, policy development and planning for children

27. Based on its role in supporting the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and on commitments made by Governments in the wake of the World Summit for Children, UNICEF has an exceptional opportunity to influence decisions on social policy and legislation now being made in the region. The UNICEF contribution to these debates can help to ensure continuing attention and priority for the needs of women and children in the coming years.

28. As of the end of 1992, the Convention on the Rights of the Child had been ratified by 15 countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the new independent States - Albania, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, the former Czechoslovakia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovenia, Ukraine and the former Yugoslavia; 11 countries in the region have also signed the Declaration of the World Summit for Children. Efforts to ensure endorsement of both the Convention and the Declaration by the remaining countries of the region are a priority in 1993.

29. Where National Committees for UNICEF exist, they are uniquely placed to support efforts to implement the Convention. Therefore, the Executive Board, at its 1992 session, encouraged the development of new or revitalized National Committees in the region. In September 1992, UNICEF established contact with local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and government officials in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania with a view to creating National Committees for UNICEF in those countries. Plans are under way to initiate discussions with relevant groups in a number of other former republics. During 1992, the Romanian Committee for UNICEF, supported by funds and technical assistance provided by the Romania country programme, carried out a series of "Days of the Rights of

the Child" in 14 major Romanian cities in order to promote public awareness and knowledge of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Bulgarian National Committee for UNICEF funded the production of a documentary on the rights of Bulgarian children which illustrates the realities of childhood after the fall of communism in the region. The Czech and Slovak Committee for UNICEF organized a round-table conference of 60 leading health professionals that established a "baby-friendly" hospital initiative committee and identified candidate hospitals that could soon meet the criteria for being accredited as "baby-friendly".

30. A meeting of National Committees of Central and Eastern European countries held in December 1992 in Velingrad, Bulgaria, provided an opportunity to review activities of committees in the region and to stimulate further action, particularly as regards the preparation of situation analyses of children and women in countries in the region and formulation of NPAs.

31. NGOs have assumed a critical role as major partners in collaborative activities, particularly in countries where UNICEF had no permanent presence. They have been successful in implementing a three-pronged strategy: (a) facilitating exchange of information and experience among the many partners active in the region; (b) supporting the development of volunteer activities; and (c) promoting the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the concept of a "first call for children".

32. In the past year, NGOs have made a vital contribution in promoting the Convention and a "first call for children". In Albania, concerns arising from abuses in intercountry adoption led the Government to request UNICEF assistance. A joint UNICEF/NGO mission was undertaken in August 1992, comprising Defence for Children International, International Social Service and Caritas International. The partners had gained experience in this area in Romania in 1991 and the mission was able to propose draft legislation, subsequently passed by the Albanian Parliament, covering national and intercountry positions on adoption and abandonment of children in the context of the provisions of the Convention. The mission also identified a number of child protection issues needing attention which have been incorporated into the proposed Albanian country programme of cooperation. The same NGO partners, joined by the International Child Catholic Bureau, worked with UNICEF to prepare a regional seminar, "Implementation of the Rights of the Child: Seeking Family-Based Alternatives for Children who are Abandoned or at Risk", held in Sofia in September 1992 by the Bulgarian National Committee and attended by delegates from 16 countries in the region.

33. UNICEF and NGO partners have prepared and organized various workshops and seminars in the region, including the International Conference on Rehabilitation of Children with Special Needs, held in the Russian Federation in October 1992, under the auspices of the Geneva-based NGO/UNICEF Coordinating Committee on Activities for Children in Eastern and Central Europe. The Committee was established in 1991 to encourage bilateral cooperation between NGOs through the transfer of information and technical assistance. An example of Committee activities includes the support provided for a series of training seminars entitled "Leadership and Organizational Development for NGOs in the Baltic States", organized by the International Federation of University Women in Tartu, Estonia, in October 1992. Further Federation seminars are planned for the region in 1993. A joint workshop in March 1993 with the Inter-Parliamentary

Union will review social policy options and questions relating to the financing of safety nets during the transition to market economies and to the responsibility of parliamentarians for budget or social legislation in some dozen countries.

34. NGOs have also played a leading role in mobilizing government action and public support in favour of breast-feeding. In the former Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland, assessment missions have taken place, training has been organized and steps have been taken to establish national breast-feeding committees. The first "baby-friendly" hospital in Central and Eastern Europe was officially designated in Hungary in October 1992.

35. In Albania and Romania, countries where UNICEF emergency activities are already under way, local and international NGOs play a major role. In Romania, in November 1992, more than 1,000 representatives from eight government departments and almost 200 NGOs participated in a five-day forum organized by UNICEF, the United States Agency for International Development and the European Community to compare and evaluate approaches, policies and practices in promoting the welfare of Romanian children. UNICEF support to education and information activities regarding the human immunodeficiency virus and the acquired immune deficiency syndrome in Romania is provided through an international NGO.

36. A number of problems in the region reflect serious violations of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Throughout the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, children of ethnic minorities are particularly at risk of suffering negative consequences of the transition. Gypsy children are a particularly vulnerable group, with poor health status, low education levels, inadequate housing, high unemployment and prejudicial treatment from the majority of the population. Gypsy children are disproportionately represented in institutions, among "street children" and in situations of conflict with the law. A preliminary technical meeting to review studies regarding the situation of gypsies in Europe was held at the International Child Development Centre (ICDC) in Florence in October 1992. In Romania, UNICEF is supporting a national study of the situation of gypsy children and their families, and the Bulgarian National Committee for UNICEF is involved in education projects and related activities for gypsies. Follow-up measures, in cooperation with ICDC, will initiate interventions to improve the conditions of these children.

37. UNICEF has carried out a number of activities to stimulate the preparation of NPAs in each of the countries of the region. The rapid changes and the plethora of problems confronting Governments in transition has slowed progress. An adapted time-frame and process which link preparation of NPAs to emerging social sector policy development should be considered. Two regional seminars are planned for the first quarter of 1993 in Hungary to assist countries in Central and Eastern Europe and in the new independent States to mobilize support for and prepare NPAs.

38. Progress was made in certain countries with regard to the preparation of national analyses of the situation of children and women. In most cases these analyses are being conducted through a collaborative effort between government departments, ministries and institutions in each country, with UNICEF support. The Bulgarian situation analysis has been published and draft situation analyses

have been prepared for Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia. Work is also under way in Hungary. In May 1992, a workshop was held in Hungary to review the findings of a comparative study on urban and social policy in the context of adjustment initiated by the World Bank and supported by UNICEF. The programme missions to Armenia and Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have produced extensive documentation on the situation of women and children in these countries.

39. UNICEF is supporting a project entitled "Public Policy and Social Conditions: The Transition to the Market Economy in Central and Eastern Europe" to assist Governments in establishing mechanisms to provide regular information for updating situation analyses, strengthening the planning process in social sectors and monitoring the goals of the World Summit for Children. ICDC is providing technical assistance. Albania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and the Slovak Republic are already included in the monitoring project. A technical workshop is scheduled for February 1993 to review progress and assess the suitability and feasibility of the full monitoring system. A related process is being considered for the new independent States. A regional report on the changing conditions of children and other vulnerable groups will be produced by UNICEF and ICDC biannually (April and November) in Florence.

40. Translation into Russian of the summary of the State of the World's Children and Facts for Life has been completed, and dissemination through cooperating NGOs and government agencies is extending advocacy on behalf of children in the new independent States.

41. UNICEF has produced a special information kit on children in Central and Eastern Europe, "Children and the Challenges of Transition". The kit, which highlights the difficulties faced by countries undergoing the transition to a market-oriented economy, is being used as an advocacy and mobilizing tool with donors and the media. UNICEF joined other United Nations agencies in the United Nations/United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) seminar on Promoting Independent/Pluralistic Media, held in Alma Ata, Kazakhstan, in October 1992.

B. Country programme preparations

42. In accordance with the mandate given by the Executive Board at its 1992 session, UNICEF carried out assessment missions on the situation and development of country programme recommendations in the qualifying countries of Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan between October and December 1992. The programming mission to Tajikistan was postponed due to civil strife in the country. The missions, comprising specialists in such areas as health, nutrition, water supply and sanitation, environment, information and communication, and economics, worked closely with government authorities and in consultation with other donors. Country programme recommendations were also prepared for Albania and Romania by UNICEF field offices in those countries.

43. Country programme recommendations for the qualifying countries are being presented to the 1993 Executive Board. One country programme submission will incorporate Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan (E/ICEF/1993/P/L.24). Separate recommendations for programme cooperation will be submitted for Albania (E/ICEF/1993/P/L.21), Armenia (E/ICEF/1993/P/L.22) and Azerbaijan (E/ICEF/1993/P/L.23).

44. An amount of $1 million from general resources and $1 million from supplementary funds is being requested for each qualifying country for 1993 and 1994. A recommendation for the extension of the special programme in Romania for two years (1993-1994) in the form of a stand-alone supplementary funding proposal is also being presented to the Board (E/ICEF/1993/P/L.29).

C. Emergency responses

45. UNICEF emergency activities have been undertaken in close collaboration with other United Nations agencies, in accordance with the integrated United Nations system approach of channelling emergency responses through the newly established Department of Humanitarian Affairs. Principal partners have been the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and WHO. UNICEF has also collaborated extensively with such agencies as the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and other NGOs active in emergency relief.

46. In the new independent States, there has been increasing evidence of a deterioration in health, standard of living and food consumption of vulnerable groups. Although assistance has been provided by the international community, large gaps remain. The continued need for urgent assistance, particularly during the winter months of 1992, was strongly highlighted at the Tokyo Coordinating Conference on Humanitarian Assistance to the new independent States in October 1992. UNICEF launched a special request for $25 million to meet the urgent medical and health needs of children during the winter months, but donor response has been slow. Critically needed pharmaceutical supplies were provided to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan using advances from the Emergency Programme Fund. A special effort was conducted in Kazakhstan in early 1993 to ensure that children do not die of acute respiratory infections during the difficult winter, through an emergency supply of basic antibiotics, training of health workers and education of the public.

47. At the request of UNHCR, an inter-agency mission comprising representatives of United Nations operational agencies, including UNICEF, the donor community, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and NGOs undertook an assessment mission to the former Yugoslavia in August 1992. Subsequently, an inter-agency appeal for humanitarian assistance was launched in September 1992. The consolidated appeal of $434,165,800 covered the priority needs for food, shelter and medical services over the next eight months. The total UNICEF contribution was $42.5 million, providing emergency supplies, equipment and technical assistance prior to the onset of winter.

48. A second specialized joint UNHCR/UNICEF mission to the former Yugoslavia was undertaken in late August to assess the effect of conflict on children. The mission report, which focused on psycho-social traumas, formulated policy guidelines for the evacuation of children and vulnerable population groups.

49. During a visit to the former Yugoslavia in September 1992, the Executive Director of UNICEF secured agreement among leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia for a "Week of Tranquillity for Children". During that week (1-7 November), UNICEF was able to reach 450,000 children in four of the six republics with blankets, clothes, food and medicine.

50. UNICEF assistance to more than 3 million refugees and internally displaced and severely affected persons in the former Yugoslavia is being provided from four locations. Interventions include the provision of basic food and medicines; restoration of health care services; water supply, sanitation systems and educational services, primary education; mine awareness campaigns; and a psycho-social rehabilitation project for children traumatized by war. The UNICEF programme is being implemented with funds received from the special appeal ($13.7 million by end-December 1992), in close cooperation with UNHCR and other United Nations agencies, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and local Red Cross, local and international NGOs, the European Community and the United Nations Protection Forces.

51. As a result of the deteriorating political and military situation in Tajikistan, an inter-agency mission under the leadership of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs was deployed in November. The mission estimated that 20,000 persons had died and 400,000 persons were displaced. Widespread shortages of drugs and medical supplies, fuel and food were reported. UNICEF provided emergency assistance in the amount of $570,000 to cover priority drugs, vaccines, supplementary food and blankets. A consolidated United Nations appeal for emergency assistance to Armenia and Azerbaijan was launched in December 1992 by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in collaboration with UNICEF, UNHCR and WFP. An inter-agency mission to Georgia is scheduled for early 1993.

52. During 1992, UNICEF continued to participate in the Task Force on Chernobyl. Supplementing its earlier contributions, the German National Committee for UNICEF contributed an additional $440,000. A cooperative programme with UNESCO to establish community rehabilitation and counselling centres has been initiated in areas affected by the disaster.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE CHALLENGES

53. Just over two years have elapsed since UNICEF returned to work in Central and Eastern Europe, the region where its activities on behalf of children began in the aftermath of the Second World War. In accordance with the priority it continues to give to the needs of children in developing countries, UNICEF has deployed only limited human and material resources. However, all countries of the region have now received one or more UNICEF missions and some form of UNICEF assistance. UNICEF responses thus far included the short-term provision of emergency assistance, advocacy for planning for children and a number of workshops relating to health and safety nets issues.

54. UNICEF resources have encouraged a number of countries to make more appropriate use of their own considerable potential and facilitated their access to diverse resources available from other donors. For example, carefully targeted UNICEF support in Romania has allowed the Government to benefit from the expertise of other United Nations agencies, such as WHO and UNESCO, and from the financial resources of the World Bank and other major donors. The inter-agency missions to the new independent States in early 1992 stimulated other donors to provide substantial emergency assistance to the region without involving a commitment of UNICEF funds. In Central and Eastern Europe, and increasingly in the new independent States and in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, partnerships between UNICEF and a number of international NGOs have made available to these countries their expertise in important areas relating to the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

55. Because of the rapid evolution of events in the region, UNICEF assistance could not be based on an extensive period of planning or long-standing knowledge of local conditions. Of necessity, the provision of assistance has moved rapidly from plan to action, relying for its effectiveness on timely and accurate identification of needs and priorities. Nevertheless, in a short space of time, a combination of flexibility in programming assistance, prompt responses to emerging needs and the priority given to collaborative approaches have created, in the region, a solid reputation for UNICEF in the region as an effective ally for children, both with Governments and with other partners.

56. Working together with United Nations agencies and other allies, UNICEF can play an important role in helping to prepare countries to confront change and to protect their children against the negative consequences of the transition to market-oriented economies. Centralized systems of power and authority are disintegrating and many health and social systems are increasingly affected by resource constraints. Responsibility for family welfare needs to be returned to parents and providers of services in the community. Existing services need to be strengthened by the transmission of new knowledge and skills. UNICEF can draw on its experience in other countries in these fields, assisting countries to empower their populations and enhance the quality of the services they provide.

57. Throughout the region, a whole range of social policy and legislation is under review, often accompanied by fundamental restructuring of existing services for children resulting from the deteriorating social and economic climate. While responding to needs in crisis situations, UNICEF has at the same time promoted analysis and debate about the nature and scale of those needs, as well as policy requirements for longer-term solutions. UNICEF is also expanding its own understanding of areas such as the protection of children at risk through family strengthening and support.

58. Where a UNICEF presence has been established, the organization has been able to make particularly good use of the opportunities offered by the extraordinary and changing circumstances in the region. Even with a very limited presence, as in Romania, UNICEF has been able to play an important role for children by maximizing the potential of partnerships for children in situations where donors and Governments lack knowledge of each other and where the reputation and authority of UNICEF can build essential bridges.

VI. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND BUDGET

59. During the past year, two additional International Professional posts and two General Service posts have been established with funding from the administrative and programme support budget, as approved by Executive Board decision 1992/19 (E/ICEF/1992/14). The posts, in New York and Geneva, will greatly enhance UNICEF capacity to support activities for children and women in Central and Eastern Europe and the new independent States.

60. The general responsibilities for this newly strengthened section include collecting data, undertaking analytical studies and supporting technical workshops and publication of materials regarding the impact or hildren and women of the changing situation in the region; providing technical support as appropriate for the development of child-focused policies in the region; and responding on an exceptional basis to requests for limited emergency assistance within normal UNICEF programmes. In addition, subject to the approval of the country programme recommendations by the Executive Board, the section will also provide support for programme activities in qualifying countries to:

(a) Provide policy guidance;

(b) Support and monitor programme preparation, implementation and review;

(c) Mobilize and coordinate headquarters and other support services as appropriate;

(d) Work with the Programme Funding Office to secure supplementary funds;

(e) Cooperate with the Emergency Section on emergencies in the region.

61. The chief of the section is based in New York, while the section works as a single unit functioning from both New York and Geneva. Policy issues and some operational aspects are normally dealt with in New York. The New York staff also provide back-up support for activities in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, while the Geneva staff deal with day-to-day matters relating to Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Romania and the former Yugoslavia. Responsibility for issues involving non-qualifying countries is decided on a case-by-case basis.

62. During the past year, a special representative for Albania was appointed. A special representative was also appointed for the former Yugoslavia, based initially in Geneva, but subsequently in the former Yugoslavia. The Executive Director intends to establish an area office to cover the five republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The representatives are primarily responsible for continuing emergency activities initiated in those countries, developing programme recommendations and, subject to Board approval, the subsequent implementation of these programmes. The UNICEF special representative in Romania will continue to carry out UNICEF activities in that country. During the past year, a number of staff have been redeployed from UNICEF offices in New York, Geneva and other places for the programming missions described in paragraph 42 above.

63. UNICEF emergency support to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Baltic States and the new independent States, including the former Yugoslavia, totalled $13.7 million for 1991-1992 (see table 1). Emergency expenditures in the region in 1992 were significantly less than 2 per cent of the total global expenditure on emergencies (see table 2). Over the period 1990-1992, expenditures totalled just over $4 million for analytical work, advocacy and support staff (see table 3).

Table 1. Emergency support to Central and Eastern Europe, the Baltic States and the new independent States, 1991-1992

(In United States dollars)

Country	Allotment	Expenditure	Balance
Albania	872 441	474 656	397 785
Bulgaria	50 000	49 453	547
Romania	4 902 323	3 785 188	1 117 135
Former Yugoslavia	22 717 399	8 272 664	14 444 734
Armenia	72 907	72 907	-
Azerbaijan	85 561	85 561	-
Belarus	24 413	24 413	-
Estonia	36 317	36 317	-
Kazakhstan	444 945	57 945	387 000
Kyrgyzstan	272 528	30 528	242 000
Latvia	45 797	45 797	-
Lithuania	66 830	66 830	-
Moldova	20 405	20 405	-
Russian Federation	349 240	201 028	148 212
Tajikistan	606 855	36 855	570 000
Turkmenistan	98 419	28 419	70 000
Ukraine	55 203	55 203	-
Uzbekistan	389 580	76 703	312 877
Former Soviet Union	373 148	295 182	77 966
TOTAL	31 484 311	13 716 054	17 768 256

Table 2. Emergency expenditures in Central and Eastern Europe, the Baltic States and the new independent States in relation to total global programme expenditures, 1992

(In millions of United States dollars)

Region	Amount	Percentage
Asia	171.7	29.9
Africa	208.5	36.2
Americas and the Caribbean	48.2	8.4
Middle East and North Africa	66.8	11.6
Interregional	71.9	12.5
Central and Eastern Europe, the Baltic States and the new independent States	8.2	1.4
Total	575.3	100.0

Table 3. Administrative and programme support budget

(In United States dollars)

Executive Board decision 1990/5 (E/ICEF/1990/13) covering 1990-1992	3 000 000
Executive Board decision 1992/19 (E/ICEF/1992/14) covering 1992-1994	6 080 000
Total allotment	9 080 000
Less: Actual expenditures as of 31 December 1992 Obligations as of 31 December 1992	 4 098 601 219 621
Unspent balance as of 1 January 1993	4 761 778

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UNICEF AND THE RESTRUCTURING AND REVITALIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS

SUMMARY

The present report has been prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 47/199 of 22 December 1992 on the operational activities of the United Nations development system. In that resolution, the Assembly called upon the governing bodies of the United Nations system to take action for the full implementation of the resolution and requested the executive heads of the funds and agencies to report to their governing bodies on measures taken for its implementation.

After a brief introduction, chapter I discusses previous activity by UNICEF and the Executive Board concerning reform of United Nations operational activities. Chapter II focuses on the provisions of resolution 47/199 that are relevant to UNICEF and the UNICEF response to them. Chapter III reports briefly on the General Assembly discussions on the reform of the United Nations in the economic and social fields.

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INTRODUCTION

1. During the past year, the General Assembly has had discussions on the reform of the United Nations system focusing on two "tracks": one track, a discussion of operational activities for development, focused particularly on field-level activities and culminated in resolution 47/199 of 22 December 1992; the second track, a discussion of reform of the United Nations in the economic and social fields and including issues of governance and finance (stimulated by the "Nordic Project"), is continuing.

2. The present report summarizes the issues related to the implementation of resolution 47/199.. Given the short period of time that has elapsed since its adoption, this report will only outline the issues raised in the resolution. The Executive Director will provide an update to the Executive Board at its 1993 regular session on how he proposes to respond to the resolution. This will require consultations and, in certain respects, agreement with UNICEF key partners. It is anticipated that many of the recommendations that the Executive Director will make, particularly those with financial implications, will require additional review by the Board at a subsequent session. In addition to the activities described in the present report, UNICEF will contribute to the report to be presented by the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council in July.

3. The present report will also review the issues of governance and finance under discussion by the General Assembly. Because those discussions are ongoing, specific recommendations cannot be made until the Assembly has concluded its work.

4. Other reports presented to the Executive Board, including the report of the Executive Director, regional reports and country programme recommendations, also provide information on UNICEF collaboration with partners such as the World Health Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank. In particular, the report on emergency operations (E/ICEF/1993/11) describes the close collaboration of UNICEF in emergencies with the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Food Programme (WFP).

I. PREVIOUS REVIEWS BY THE UNICEF EXECUTIVE BOARD

5. The Executive Board has reviewed a number of issues related to the reform of the United Nations system at previous sessions. In 1989, the Executive Director presented a report entitled "UNICEF and the United Nations system: an agenda for inter-agency action" (E/ICEF/1989/L.8), and in 1990, a follow-up report on "UNICEF and the operational activities of the United Nations system: an update for 1990" (E/ICEF/1990/L.8). In decision 1989/14 (E/ICEF/1989/12), the Executive Board encouraged UNICEF to intensify collaboration with the United Nations system to fulfil the developmental needs of recipient countries. In decision 1990/21 (E/ICEF/1990/13), the Board requested the Executive Director to continue to arrange active UNICEF participation in the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational Activities) (CCSQ/OPS) and the Joint

Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP) in order to promote the harmonization of procedures, the coincidence of programme cycles, the move to co-location of country offices and the effective working of the resident coordinator system. In 1992, the Executive Director presented to the Board an informal note containing 10 points for reform of the United Nations system. In response to decision 1992/11 (E/ICEF/1992/14), the Executive Director participated in the debates of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly on these issues.

II. THE UNICEF RESPONSE TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 47/199

6. The following sections outline the major elements of resolution 47/199 that are relevant to UNICEF. In order to facilitate the deliberations of the Executive Board, they focus on areas directly relevant to UNICEF operations. The numbers in parentheses refer to the relevant paragraphs of the resolution.

A. The country strategy note

(Paragraphs 9, 39 (c) and 39 (g))

7. As discussed during the 1992 Executive Board session, UNICEF developed the idea of a country strategy note and proposed it to the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), which ultimately accepted it unanimously. The General Assembly urged that the country strategy note be prepared by interested recipient Governments in cooperation with the United Nations system.

8. UNICEF is now working to implement this provision through several channels. JCGP is supporting the United Nations to draft instructions that will be sent to resident coordinators. UNICEF also intends to propose to ACC through CCSQ/OPS that there be an active system-wide effort. Finally, UNICEF has briefed all country representatives to give them guidance and encourage strong support.

B. Common premises

(Paragraph 42)

9. The General Assembly welcomed the decision of JCGP to set a target for increasing the number of common premises, while emphasizing that this should be achieved in ways that increase efficiency (e.g. administrative consolidation) and do not increase costs.

10. UNICEF has proposed, and JCGP has accepted, that a plan be developed for a significant increase in common premises. The JCGP Subgroup on Harmonization (currently chaired by UNICEF) has prepared an initial country-by-country review and illustrative costing which will be reviewed by JCGP. UNICEF will also encourage participation from agencies and bodies that do not belong to JCGP.

C. Harmonization of programme cycles

(Paragraph 10)

11. Members of JCGP (UNICEF, UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund, WFP and the International Fund for Agricultural Development) had begun earlier to harmonize their programme cycles and adapting them to Governments' national planning cycles. The General Assembly reaffirmed the need to continue this process.

12. The JCGP Subgroup on Harmonization has prepared a work plan for an initiative that will aim to ensure full harmonization of cycles in virtually all countries not facing emergency or exceptional circumstances (perhaps 80 per cent of all countries).

D. The programme approach

(Paragraphs 12-14)

13. The Secretary-General has been requested by the General Assembly to promote an early agreement on a common interpretation of the programme approach.

14. The JCGP Subgroup on Harmonization has held a workshop/seminar on this issue and is supporting a paper that will be prepared by the United Nations and presented to CCSQ/OPS.

E. Rules, formats and procedures

(Paragraphs 29, 32-34)

15. Inter-agency coordination mechanisms, particularly JCGP, have been requested to give priority to simplifying, harmonizing and increasing the transparency of their procedures. JCGP has been requested to agree upon a common manual focusing on those issues. Procedures should be output-oriented, with corresponding evaluation processes. The General Assembly emphasized that the shift to a programme approach requires that formats, rules, procedures and reports support national capacity-building, as well as the need for field-level accountability.

16. The Subgroup on Harmonization has developed a work plan for addressing this issue, and work has begun on a common manual.

F. The resident coordinator system

(Paragraphs 37-39)

17. Resolution 47/199 stresses that particular attention should be paid to selecting resident coordinators who have a competent background in development, as well as managerial and team-building skills. In addition, the pool of those eligible for resident representative/resident coordinator posts should be

widened and there should be increased transparency in the selection process. JCGP will review this matter in April at its high-level meeting.

18. In strengthening the resident coordinator system, the General Assembly has emphasized that the creation of an additional bureaucratic layer should be avoided and that the separate identities and separate representation of the funds and programmes at the country level should be appropriately ensured, along with a clear and improved division of labour.

19. UNICEF will seek to ensure that these provisions are an integral part of the work of ACC and JCGP, as they are important to maintaining clear lines of accountability.

20. The General Assembly requests that individual country representatives should consult with and take into account any views of the resident coordinator during major programming exercises and that the resident coordinator may propose amendments to major projects or programmes to relate them better to the country strategy note.

21. It is the policy of UNICEF to invite the resident coordinator to be involved in the key stages of the UNICEF country programming process, where he/she can offer his/her views and suggestions, which are given serious consideration. Consultations have already taken place with all UNICEF representatives so as to ensure the strengthening of this process, and this dimension will be included in guidelines to field offices that the Executive Director will issue on the implementation of resolution 47/199. This issue has also been included in a questionnaire that is being sent to all UNICEF field representatives to ascertain the current levels of involvement and cross-participation and to identify obstacles that need to be addressed. The country strategy note and the field-level committees will strengthen the degree and quality of involvement by the partners of UNICEF.

G. Training

(Paragraphs 43-46)

22. Common training efforts that promote a shift to the programme approach and use of innovative execution modalities are urged both for headquarters and especially the field. Efforts at the national level should include on-the-job training and should develop national trainers so as to establish a continuous training process. In addition to the programme approach and national execution, other issues should be included such as programme accountability, financial auditing, support costs, evaluation and monitoring. National institutional expertise should receive particular attention.

23. The Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Personnel) and the JCGP Subgroup on Personnel and Training will be examining this issue. UNICEF will hold bilateral discussions with the International Labour Organisation Training Centre in Turin, Italy, in March and April.

H. Decentralization

(Paragraphs 24-25, 27)

24. The General Assembly urges that the United Nations system further decentralize capacity and authority to the field level. Governing bodies of all United Nations organizations are strongly urged to expand to the maximum extent possible the level of authority for cancelling, modifying or adding activities within approved programmes and for shifting resources, within approved lines, of programme components (with the approval of national authorities).

25. UNICEF is often cited as the most decentralized of all United Nations organizations. UNICEF will continue to review its procedures to examine possibilities for improvement and, above all, intends to ensure that its experience is available on a system-wide basis to support the efforts of its partners. It is important that efforts to make the overall level of decentralization more uniform to support the current degree of UNICEF decentralization.

I. Procurement

(Paragraphs 27-28)

26. Organizations are urged to undertake the procurement of expertise and equipment at the country level, with due regard to international competitive bidding. Similarly, efforts should be made to procure from underutilized major donors, within the framework of international competitive bidding.

27. UNICEF currently has significant levels of decentralization for local procurement and special efforts for procurement in developing countries and major underutilized donors (while maintaining the principles of international competitive bidding).

J. Field-level committees

(Paragraphs 40-41)

28. In countries where justified by the scale of activities of the United Nations, resident coordinators are called upon to establish a field-level committee, comprising all United Nations system representatives, to serve as a coordinating mechanism in the countries concerned. The committees should undertake advisory functions, in consultation with the host Government, and provide guidance on sectoral strategies, proposed programmes and specific issues or problems requiring a coordinated response.

29. UNICEF will propose that the United Nations ensure that committees are established in all countries of appropriate size and that, above all, the progress of these committees be monitored through clear, simplified reporting (ideally done collectively) that is reviewed regularly by senior staff at headquarters (including through ACC). UNICEF also intends to use these committees to help strengthen the involvement of organizations with its country

programming process, in a manner similar to the current involvement of other organizations at key stages in the programming process. UNICEF also intends that this provision will create opportunities for involvement by UNICEF representatives in other organizations' programme and project preparations.

III. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE

30. The General Assembly is currently reviewing the governance and finance of the United Nations organizations, including many issues raised by the "Nordic United Nations Project". In the area of governance, major issues include developing more effective system-wide governance (perhaps through more effective use of the Economic and Social Council, with an international development council "function") and proposals for smaller governing bodies of the individual organizations that would meet on a more regular basis. In the area of finance, the General Assembly is studying ways to ensure adequate financial support on a more predictable and stable basis and examining the question of burden-sharing.

31. UNICEF will follow closely the Assembly's deliberations on these matters and will report to the Executive Board any developments that may be relevant or require action on its part. The Executive Director believes that a successful outcome of these deliberations will be important to future UNICEF efforts.

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UNICEF PROGRAMMES FOR THE URBAN POOR

SUMMARY

The urban poor number 600 million, over 40 per cent of the total urban population in developing countries. The vulnerability of their children has been exacerbated in the past decade by urbanization amid economic and environmental crises and recurring conflicts. Disaggregated data are scarce, but where available they indicate that urban children fare worse than the national average and often worse than their rural counterparts.

The most creative responses for coping with this situation have come from the urban poor themselves. UNICEF, through its urban basic services (UBS) strategy, has joined a number of Governments and non-governmental organizations in supporting the kind of empowerment strategy that the multi-donor evaluation has proposed be used more often. However, this strategy has not been applied vigorously or consistently and has suffered from the lack of analysis regarding impact and costing. The new opportunities presented by the heightened global concern for the child and the environment, as well as by positive trends towards decentralization and democratization, make a realignment of UBS timely and necessary.

UNICEF plans a two-pronged approach comprising an urban focus in various sectoral programmes and a revitalized UBS strategy, with four main thrusts: achievement of the decade goals for children, along with partnerships for poverty reduction; action on primary environmental care; attention to children in especially difficult circumstances; and application of the concept of "urban development with a human face".

The Executive Director urges all countries to address the needs of poor urban children through their national programmes of action and through follow-up to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development Agenda 21, along the lines described above. He further recommends that UNICEF support developing countries in

their efforts to do so through country programmes, situation analyses, advocacy and monitoring and evaluation.

Chapter VII of this document contains the full recommendation for Board review and approval.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The present paper reviews current UNICEF urban policy and strategies, as well as developments since these strategies were initially approved by the Executive Board in 1982 (E/ICEF/695). It also makes appropriate recommendations for the future.

I. URBAN TRENDS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN OF THE URBAN POOR

A. Demographic, ecological, economic and political trends

2. Nearly 1.5 billion persons, over one third of the developing world's population, live in urban areas today. By the year 2000, two fifths, or 2 billion persons, will be urban dwellers. Over the past decade, urban populations have grown at a rate of 4.5 per cent, while rural populations have grown by only 1 per cent. This trend is expected to continue for at least three decades, despite the fact that both rates are slowing somewhat. In effect, the developing world's urban population will double its 1980 level by the year 2000, and triple it by the year 2010, if the predicted 3 per cent growth in the next decade occurs. The urbanization rate varies among regions: Africa and Asia, whose populations are less than one third urban, have urbanization rates of 5 per cent and 4 per cent, respectively; Latin America, whose population is almost three quarters urban, has an urbanization rate of 3 per cent. 1/

3. There is phenomenal global diversity, with urban centres ranging from mega-cities (with at least 8 million inhabitants) to small towns of only a few thousand inhabitants. During the 1950-1980 period, the 165 cities in developing countries that had a population of over 1 million had a high average annual growth - between 3 and 6 per cent. 2/ In the last decade, natural increase has been an increasingly important factor, accounting for over one half of the growth of many cities, while the remaining growth has been due to immigration, incorporation of villages into urban municipalities and the changing definition of areas from rural to urban as they attain a certain size. Some reverse migration occurred after structural adjustment programmes were introduced, but this has not diminished overall urban growth. 3/

4. These broad aggregates and long-term trends hide many important features of urbanization that are of concern to UNICEF, especially since nearly one half of the urban population are children. Urban growth continues to be fuelled by the pull of city jobs and amenities and the push of stagnant rural economies. At the same time, armed conflict, drought, famine and environmental degradation in the countryside are driving people into cities at an increasing rate, especially in Africa. Many health problems, including respiratory infections, gastro-intestinal disorders, birth defects and skin diseases, are caused mainly by poor housing, unsafe water supply, inadequate sanitation or air and noise pollution. Inadequate standards and technologies in developing countries compound the problem, affecting all residents; but the poor, due to the location of their housing in undesirable areas, suffer more. 4/

5. The main burden of poverty is being borne increasingly by urban areas. In 1980, there were twice as many poor rural households (80 million) as poor urban

ones (40 million). But by the year 2000, more than one half of the absolute poor will be concentrated in urban centres, according to current estimates (72 million households in urban areas as against 56 million in rural areas). 5/ Nearly all cities have some slums and pockets of poverty, and many developing country cities are overwhelmingly poor, with only a few prosperous areas.

6. Such structural problems as unemployment, underemployment and low wages, which have long assailed the urban poor, were exacerbated in the 1980s due to economic crises, especially in Africa and Latin America. The structural adjustment programmes adopted by most countries removed subsidies and price controls (which had previously helped the urban poor) and reduced employment opportunities in the largely urban government and parastatal sectors. Reduced public spending, particularly in the social sectors, as well as cutbacks in public and industrial investment, drastically lessened economic opportunities in urban areas. The brunt of adjustment has been borne by the urban poor, who were already suffering and therefore more vulnerable to crisis. One of the main outlets for these conflicting pressures has been the continued growth of the urban informal sector.

7. Women are entering the paid workforce in ever-increasing numbers, but generally in low-paid, informal jobs, while male unemployment has been increasing. The high proportion of households headed by a single parent, usually the mother, both among the rural and urban poor, is due to many factors - separation of work from home, the breakdown of family structures, dislocation and family separation caused by natural and man-made disasters or search for employment. Households headed by women are far more likely to be poor. 6/ Children in single-parent families are more prone to be malnourished and to drop out of school early; they are also more likely to be exploited at work and to become street children. 7/

8. The end of the cold war has seen a reduction in ideological conflict, but an increase in ethnic and religious strife, contributing to large-scale flight to the relative safety of urban areas. On the positive side, the widespread resurgence of democratization has been accompanied in many places by decentralization and popular participation in public policy. Increased autonomy, power and importance have been assigned to local Governments in many countries. However, this has often not been accompanied by the necessary financial power and skills, nor by the political will to address the needs of the urban poor.

B. Impact on children and their families

9. Although urban areas are considered more favoured than rural areas with regard to social services and quality of life, the realities and problems of poor urban children and their families are masked by the lack of disaggregated data within urban centres. The following table shows that the infant mortality rate (IMR) is higher in slums than in the rest of the city. It is often higher than the national rate and sometimes even the rural rate. 8/ Similar contrasts occur for the incidence of morbidity and disease. This is especially the case with regard to such environment-related diseases as diarrhoea, tuberculosis and ascaris, which are more prevalent in congested urban areas with poor housing and

IMR in low-income vs. other areas

(Per 1,000 live births)

Location	Year	National	Low-income urban areas	Other urban areas	Rural areas
Dhaka, Bangladesh	1991	116	142	68	93
Guatemala City, Guatemala	1989	54	50	48	
Karachi, Pakistan	1985	120	95-152	32	
Managua, Nicaragua	1987	56	60	50	60
Port-au-Prince, Haiti	1983	110	200		66
Porto Alegre, Brazil	1985	70	75.5	25	
Sao Paulo, Brazil	(circa 1983)	80	175	42	

Source: See note 8. (Data not available for all areas.)

sanitation. In a survey of 35 countries, average access to safe water was 64 per cent in marginal urban areas and 67 per cent in rural areas. 9/ Even these figures do not reveal the true extent of intra-urban inequities: the poor pay 3 to 10 times more than other urban dwellers (whose consumption is subsidized by low rates) and spend up to 40 per cent of their earnings on water. Urban malnutrition is a widespread problem. In one study, energy intake in slums was only one half or two thirds of what it was in other areas; another study found that up to 50 per cent of children in slum areas were malnourished, 10 per cent severely, and the incidence of anaemia was twice as high in slums as elsewhere. 10/ Budget cuts in social services have affected both the urban and rural poor, and as these are the groups whose children are most at risk for survival, development and protection, their situation has continued to deteriorate.

10. Poverty and the breakdown in family structures continue to produce more working children and street children as well as more child abuse and abandonment. Hidden and unrecognized forms of child labour (through exploitative forms of work in the domestic/informal service sector), as well as child prostitution, have been increasing in many countries. In some countries, street children have been attacked or killed by vigilantes and gangs. While the increasing violence against women and children is not solely an urban phenomenon, the disintegration of families and communities, the deterioration of social values and the effects of tension and rivalries are exacerbated in a rapidly urbanizing area and tend to increase greatly the frequency of violence in urban life, both in the home and on the streets.

II. RESPONSES TO RECENT URBAN TRENDS

A. Responses of the urban poor

11. Those who are the victims of adverse socio-economic trends have been very enterprising and creative in the ways they respond to them. The growth in the urban informal sector in housing and infrastructure development, manufacturing, commerce, transport, social services and appropriate technology is the result of the contributions of people, sometimes assisted by, but sometimes in spite of, actions by Government, municipalities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the private sector and international agencies. Such community organizations as the barangay (small municipality) development committees in the Philippines and the communal kitchens in Peru and Mexico, targeting at-risk families, especially mothers and children, are only two examples of community-managed initiatives. 11/

B. National responses

12. Developing country Governments have worked with international agencies to mitigate poverty and the social impact of the structural adjustment process. However, these mechanisms have generally been short-term solutions that circumvent existing service structures rather than reform them, and they are not always targeted towards those most in need. As Governments find social services and infrastructure increasingly difficult to provide, owing to the combination of resource constraints and population growth, NGOs have moved to fill the vacuum through creative partnerships with urban communities. Some Governments, along with international agencies, the private sector, religious groups, professional organizations, labour unions and, in some cases, universities, have supported such ventures.

13. Most Governments face a real dilemma. In providing necessary urban services, they risk encouraging more migration. One major response, despite the uncertain record of such measures in previous decades, is to stem the tide of rural-urban migration, or at least migration to the largest cities, by rural development programmes or measures intended to attract people to smaller urban centres ("growth poles"). Another response, less common than in previous decades, is slum removal through clearance and relocation to the urban periphery. However, slum clearance has rarely succeeded because the poor return, out of sheer necessity for survival, to slum areas, their only link to limited employment opportunities. On the other hand, some Governments have legalized unauthorized settlements through negotiations or land-sharing schemes between the squatters and landlords (as, for example, in Bangkok, Thailand, and Tegucigalpa, Honduras) and provided basic urban services.

14. In several of the more economically advanced developing countries, urban development policies have themselves perpetuated urban poverty and further undermined the capacities of the urban poor. Urban redevelopment concerned primarily with the quality of buildings and the rate of return on urban land and infrastructure have directly or indirectly led to the large-scale dislocation of poor urban communities.

15. Service providers rarely take into account the actual barriers and opportunity costs that prevent the urban poor from using services that are available in cities. Additionally, there is a grey area as far as slums, shanty towns and camps for the displaced are concerned. They are often not included in the jurisdiction of the municipality, are not part of the rural district around the city and are forgotten both in service provision and statistics. When the displaced are regarded as temporary refugees, services may not be allotted to them at all.

III. UNICEF URBAN THRUSTS IN THE 1980s

A. The 1982 Executive Board recommendation and the UNICEF response

16. The urban basic services (UBS) strategy is the result of the evolution of UNICEF experience in urban programmes of the 1970s. The Executive Board reviewed UNICEF progress in 1982 and directed the organization to expand its support for urban programmes, based on country-specific needs, endorsing the community-based approach. The Board stressed the need for programme convergence and for advocacy and support for these approaches to be incorporated in government social planning as well as in physical development projects.

17. Over the last decade, UNICEF assistance to children and women in urban areas focused on support for national, centrally designed and sectoral services in urban areas; support for subnational, participatory and intersectoral UBS programmes; greatly expanded efforts in favour of working children and street children; country-specific studies and assessments; and advocacy for macroeconomic issues affecting the urban poor, for example, "adjustment with a human face". In the early 1990s, the Mayors as Defenders of Children Initiative called upon mayors to pursue the decade goals for their own cities by assessing the situation of children, formulating subnational plans of action and supporting community as well as sectoral initiatives.

18. By 1982, when the report entitled "Urban basic services, reaching children and women of urban poor" (E/ICEF/1982/L.1440 and Add.1 and Corr.1) was presented to the Executive Board, UNICEF had UBS programmes in 43 countries, and 24 additional countries expressed interest in developing similar programmes. In subsequent years, the number of UBS programmes and the number of UNICEF staff specializing in the urban field remained about the same. Nevertheless, UBS programmes in a few countries, such as India, Indonesia and Mexico, continued to expand, while some new ones appeared in Ethiopia, Guatemala and the Philippines. Allowing for possible differences of interpretation among countries, it appears that overall in recent years urban areas have been receiving about 20 per cent of UNICEF assistance, e.g., in terms of health sector, family-based and community-based services. Urban water supply and sanitation received less than 5 per cent of overall expenditures, largely due to the high-cost urban technologies typically adopted, which UNICEF did not support. In 1990 and 1991, about 2 per cent of all programme resources were spent on children in especially difficult circumstances. By 1991, 27 countries had UNICEF-assisted programmes for street children, although only one third were outside of Latin America.

B. Urban basic services: experiences and strengths

19. The rationale for the urban focus of UNICEF has always been that the urban poor are among the most vulnerable, while at the same time they are highly resourceful and resilient and contribute significantly to urban and national development. Given some support, they can improve dramatically their situation and that of their children. Due to the peculiar urban conditions of density, cash economy, high proportion of female-headed households and lack of traditional community and extended family ties, appropriate mechanisms have to be devised for bringing development to the urban poor. Also, many poor families (urban as well as rural) have a number of child survival, development and protection problems. These various aspects of the problem faced by the urban poor called for convergent basic services, combined with strong community participation and family capacity-building. Thus, a dual approach was adopted to bring direct services to the poor and to provide indirect services through training of government officials and service providers and advocating policy changes designed to help the urban poor.

20. UBS is more than the sum of its parts. Its mutually reinforcing sectoral interventions are driven by objectives that include community empowerment through participation, organization, training and access to local government services; universal coverage of all target groups by sectoral services; institutional linkages of trained community volunteers with paraprofessionals to assure support for community services; intersectoral coordination of planning and service provision at the local level and policy coordination at the national level; incorporation of urban poor community needs into government policies and programmes; use of low-cost technologies to ensure their continued use under local management; capacity-building for communities, local government and national agencies to support services and community development in poor urban areas; sustainability that flows from the realization of the above objectives, especially empowerment, low-cost technologies and capacity-building; institutionalization and "going-to-scale" through training, supporting community development and intersectoral coordination structures in local government; and influencing national laws and policies that benefit the urban poor. No single project can claim to have incorporated all these aspects, but there are many examples of the success achieved when several elements are combined in one project.

21. Different patterns of linkages between sectoral goals and the UBS approach have emerged over time. In several countries, the UBS programme has embraced sectoral interventions and thus enabled a sharper focus on measurable goals. India's UBS programme provided the necessary social infrastructure and community involvement to facilitate other programmes. One example of this was the 1989 cholera epidemic in Delhi, when UBS volunteers supported by health workers managed to keep the death toll to 1 out of 20,000 slum dwellers, while the city as a whole had 1,300 deaths. Lima, Peru, had a similar experience in the 1991 cholera epidemic.

22. Moreover, in several countries, sectoral programmes were an "entry point" for participatory development and service convergence. For example, in Tegucigalpa, using a water supply and sanitation project as a starting-point, the community trained health volunteers to run popular pharmacies and community child-care services and is now planning ways to improve sanitation. 12/

Interventions that focused on such specific target activities as women's income generation and the rehabilitation of street children and working children, tended to link up with existing UBS programmes in the same area, sooner or later, but seldom created an entry point for a full range of services at the community level. Both these types of responses are found in the cases studied in "The urban child in distress", a research project of the International Child Development Centre. The study examined urban slum families as well as street children and working children in 20 cities of various sizes in Brazil, India, Italy, Kenya and the Philippines and analysed both rehabilitative support to such children and preventive approaches and basic services targeting high-risk families. The studies stimulated country-level policy discussions based on promising municipal-level programmes for urban children in especially difficult circumstances.

23. Sometimes, however, the linkages were poor. For example, national universal child immunization (UCI) efforts did not use the UBS structures in India and the Philippines until the end of the decade, when special efforts had to be made in order to achieve the targets. In both cases, the universal coverage in UBS provided useful lessons regarding community involvement and led to course corrections in non-UBS areas. Campaigns and other specific sectoral interventions such as UCI and oral rehydration therapy generally reached their targets in urban areas, but only in a few cases served as entry points for the expansion and/or upgrading of urban health services, as, for example, in Turkey and in some towns in the Philippines.

24. Several examples exist of multisectoral UBS projects. Often these projects start from one entry point, as in the case of Tegucigalpa (see para. 22 above). The Olongapo (Philippine) project is a good illustration of UBS stimulating active involvement of the community in identifying needs and priorities and promoting intersectoral coordination. The project has achieved success in community-based health, skills training, credit mechanisms, rehabilitation of street children, community monitoring systems and barangay committees. A project in Coatzacoalcos, Mexico, also had multisectoral and community empowerment objectives from the start. Some key achievements include the community-based monitoring of young children's growth and health; the provision of health services to small children and mothers; and pre-school and primary education opportunities. 13/ In some countries, the UBS strategy has been introduced following multisectoral settlement improvement programmes, such as in Indonesia's kampung (urban, usually low-income, settlement or village) improvement programme. UNICEF worked to enhance community empowerment and child-focused activities in development projects that otherwise emphasized physical infrastructure.

25. Successful UBS projects have expanded in Indonesia and the Philippines and have attracted funds (in Hyderabad, India, 13 times the initial amount provided by UNICEF and the Government). They have also spawned other projects and have been instrumental in national acceptance of the overall concept. Since the 1970s, UBS in India has spread from three initial towns to 168 towns and has been incorporated in the national development plan. The Philippines urban pro-poor programme is also patterned on the UBS approach.

26. Even when constraints regarding institutionalization of successful local experience (such as in the case of Guayaquil, Ecuador, between 1981 and 1985)

prevented UNICEF-assisted efforts from going to scale, the possible benefits of community empowerment and capacity-building remain. 14/

C. Constraints

27. In many cases, the need to build community confidence has led UBS programmes to focus on the process of community development rather than on the impact on children and women. The interplay between impact and process has not always been understood or managed creatively. Also, as community empowerment and capacity-building are key strategies in UBS, the approach takes time for major impacts to be felt. Demands on UNICEF and other staff are also initially high and could be a limiting factor in expansion.

28. As UBS works primarily at the community level, it sometimes does not link up with national sectoral programmes. On the other hand, such national programmes do not easily connect with community-based programmes. Working on a multisectoral programme with multiple partners in the Government and outside is inherently difficult. Effecting such linkages remains a key challenge.

29. The absence of systematic monitoring and evaluation procedures has resulted in mainly anecdotal evidence of the gains and shortcomings of projects, and of the approach itself. Community-based baseline surveys have been invaluable for community empowerment and action. However, little attention has been paid to determining the cost of such interventions, particularly community contributions. The multiplier effects of community cost-sharing/recovery schemes and community ability and willingness to contribute need to be explored. These are obviously not easy exercises in a multisectoral, community-based programme, but appropriate methods must be worked out.

30. The fact that most UBS projects are initially small in scale facilicates community mobilization and local situation analysis which, in turn, helps to establish operational methods and fine-tune strategies. There is a need to move from small to large scale with greater speed. Yet, as the process is community-based, this cannot be ensured by a directive but has to be nurtured during the initial phases in each location (community or urban area). Capacity-building of local and national agencies, both governmental and NGO, has helped, as past examples have shown, but these need to be included in overall planning. At the same time, it is necessary to be aware of the pitfalls in rapid expansion, as the quality of the programme, and even its essential features (community empowerment, convergence and locally managed approaches), may suffer in the process.

IV. NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR A SHARPER FOCUS ON THE URBAN POOR

31. The end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s saw a number of key developments that augur well for all children, particularly poor urban children, despite the evident problems that have been discussed previously in chapter I. The Convention on the Rights of the Child provides the broad umbrella for this positive environment. Not only does the Convention automatically cover all children, but article 2 explicitly demands that disparities among children be eliminated. Several other articles, in referring to children in especially

difficult circumstances, imply that the poor urban child needs special attention. The 1990 World Summit for Children similarly targets disparity reduction, and thus requires that the poor urban child be included in programmes that are part of national programmes of action (NPAs). The goals set by the World Summit, and adopted in the various NPAs, clearly cannot be achieved unless poor urban children, as well as poor rural children, are targeted. Steps to formulate and implement subnational plans of action have already been taken by some Governments, including those of Colombia and Mexico, which have city plans of action, and India, which in its NPA has noted the problems caused by rapid urbanization and has listed its UBS programme as a vehicle for achieving the plan's objectives in the areas of health, nutrition and women in development. The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women stresses the fulfilment of women's strategic and practical needs. Together, the two Conventions and the World Summit Declaration represent a major opportunity to invoke the moral duty of the world to strive for the well-being of all children as never before. Emphasizing the rights of, and goals for, all children requires a specific focus on poor urban children.

32. Agenda 21, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), calls upon Governments "to promote primary environmental care [PEC] activities that address the basic needs of communities, improve the environment for children at the household and community level and encourage the participation and empowerment of local populations ... towards the objective of integrated community management of resources, especially in developing countries". Clearly, the PEC concept applied to urban areas has many similarities to the UBS strategy. Agenda 21 also includes an explicit focus on "meeting the urban health challenge", stressing coordinated action, through municipal and local health plans, "enabling strategies" and documentation of intra-urban differences. Improvement of urban management and provision of an integrated environmental infrastructure are stressed. UNICEF can respond to the call of Agenda 21 and cooperate with the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development by helping to put the concept of PEC to work for children in low-income urban areas. New partnerships and a new environmental perspective can help to revitalize the UBS strategy in this decade.

33. The political climate in the post-cold war era is itself a dynamic force in favour of decentralization and empowerment of the common people. The concept of the "civil society" and recognition of its role and that of NGOs create new possibilities for action by and for the urban poor. With the growing trend towards privatization, the private sector can be challenged to share in the social as well as economic solutions to urban problems. The Mayors as Defenders of Children Initiative is based on the premise that municipal governments have the moral and institutional duty to respond to the needs of their citizens and to promote the survival, protection and development of children. An International Colloquium of Mayors was held in Dakar, Senegal, in January 1992 at which mayors from across the globe committed themselves to specific actions for children; a second colloquium is scheduled for July 1993, when more mayors are expected to take up the initiative.

34. Several major international agencies have raised their level of concern, and often funding, for the urban poor in recent years. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) annual reports on human development and the 1990 World Bank report, as well as its Social Dimensions of Adjustment projects, have

focused on poverty, human resources, decentralization and empowerment. 15/ The World Bank's new urban policy combines the economic management of poverty with its social management, through basic social services and better access to infrastructure and housing. 16/ The UNDP urban strategy for the 1990s calls for a programme approach to urban development which will coordinate multisectoral activities, promote women's participation and help to generate jobs and skills for the disadvantaged. 17/ The World Health Organization (WHO) has been promoting urban primary health care (PHC) and a "healthy cities" project for some years now and has co-sponsored urban PHC meetings with UNICEF. The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (HABITAT) has developed a strategy that seeks to help the urban poor meet their own shelter needs through credit, organization and technical assistance.

35. Such concerns, if channelled properly, should help programmes that benefit the poor urban child go to scale. It is worth noting that some of these agencies, such as the World Bank and UNDP, have voiced their appreciation of the UNICEF UBS approach and achievements and have also indicated their interest in working with UNICEF to expand and sustain this approach. The recent emphasis on increased teamwork within the United Nations system will strengthen already existing attempts and generate new ones.

V. RATIONALE FOR REVISING UNICEF URBAN POLICY

36. A review of UNICEF efforts over the past decade on behalf of the urban child, in the light of the new development climate, indicates new directions for the future. The urban poor demand attention both in their own right, and as a critical group in the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and attainment of the decade goals for children. Disparity reduction is an essential element in both, and no disparity is more glaring than that between children of the urban poor and those of other urban dwellers. Poverty reduction through the provision of minimum flow of basic services to the urban poor is therefore a major and necessary step. UNICEF has a unique opportunity to promote balanced national and international policies that support both rural and urban poor, taking advantage of, and building on, the climate of decentralization and democratization, the increasing support for active children's and environmental movements and the new policies of many key international development agencies.

37. As shown by the multi-donor evaluation of UNICEF, it is difficult to achieve the proper balance between large-scale programme delivery, capacity-building and empowerment. The UNICEF experience with UBS programmes shows that going to scale with programmes based on a community empowerment strategy is possible but complex. The two-pronged strategy proposed below aims at an optimum mix of these elements through sectoral programmes serving entire urban areas and specific programmes or interventions targeting the urban poor. The UBS approach has special strengths that should be built upon: improved service delivery, community empowerment, capacity-building, multisectoral coordination and low-cost local solutions. To support this approach, the following are needed: more measurable objectives; better baseline data; monitoring and evaluation systems; effective cost analysis; and greater attention to sustainability and universalization. It is also essential to use successful UBS

projects as springboards to mobilize resources, encourage replication and incorporate UBS approaches in sectoral programmes.

VI. PROPOSED POLICY: NEW ELEMENTS AND EMPHASES

38. The two interrelated guiding principles of the UNICEF revised urban policy, are: (a) the poor urban child should be a key concern in all sectoral programmes; and (b) a revitalized UBS strategy should be pursued, building on its successes and seizing new opportunities for expansion. Both principles should be derived from a country's NPA, with the sectoral programmes striving to reach all urban children, while the UBS strategy focuses specifically on the poor through innovative, viable approaches and supports links between community and provider.

A. Urban focus in sectoral programmes

39. UNICEF should support NPAs and sectoral plans to examine the country's urban problems and assess the impact of policies and programmes on urban children, with special reference to those in low-income areas. Mechanisms will be needed that take into account the special urban situations and opportunities and that adapt sectoral strategies accordingly. Urban social services are generally under the authority of the municipality, yet the private sector and NGOs are also key actors. Therefore, all three need to cooperate to ensure the success of both routine services and special campaigns. A municipal plan of action should be prepared with the collaboration of these various actors and community groups; the Mayor's Initiative offers a special opportunity to do so. The sectoral systems in each type of urban area, and perhaps each individual major city in a country, may need to be analysed before the NPA can be adapted to urban areas.

40. Patterns of disease, indicators of morbidity and mortality and data regarding occupation, shelter and environment should be assessed in order to establish priorities. The role of such providers as national Government, municipal government, health insurers, formal sector and workers' benefit schemes, private practitioners, informal providers and existing community-based health systems have to be taken into account. As urban health problems are closely tied to the environment, a multisectoral approach, coordinated at the municipal level, needs to be adopted. In view of the fact that natural increase contributes substantially to urban growth, UNICEF should support government and United Nations Population Fund programmes. The "baby-friendly" hospital initiative should be given community and institutional support to aid urban mothers, especially working mothers, by providing crèche and day-care services, paid post-natal leave and flexible working hours. To make primary education available to all, studies should be conducted to determine why children fail to enrol, why they drop out of school and why they repeat grades. The data should be disaggregated by location and by gender. If the formal system cannot be flexible enough to accommodate all children, then a non-formal system should be established (as was done, for example, by the Undugu Society in Kenya). Here again the private sector is a key player and needs to be part of the search for viable solutions. Low-cost water supply and sanitation techniques need to be more extensively used and supported. The environmental effects of water and

waste disposal need to be addressed. Social welfare services that generally cater to children in especially difficult circumstances are often in need of staff, funds and refresher training. Some may even need a reassessment of their mandate. Traditionally, the aim of these services has been to get children off the streets; they should now move to support and rehabilitate these children. The role of NGOs is crucial in this area due to their flexibility and commitment; the primary role of the Government may be to facilitate NGO efforts.

41. Addressing the inequities in the provision of urban social services will necessitate the following four types of action which target the poor: (a) restructuring sector resources in favour of low-cost technologies and approaches; (b) advocacy and support for institutional capacity-building, community participation/management and promotion of such innovative approaches as linkage with income-generating activities; (c) lifting subsidies to the better-off to facilitate subsidization of services to the poor and using innovative, soft recyclable loans to accelerate coverage of the unserved; and (d) promotion and support of intra- and interregional exchange of innovative ideas and approaches, as well as technical cooperation among developing countries. Sectoral programmes and their staff should be oriented to deal with communities and local government. Close interaction between these programmes and UBS and other community-based programmes should be encouraged; in addition, specific training and exchange of experience must be carried out. Sectoral components of UNICEF country programmes need to include a specific urban focus so as to support the thrust of the sectoral and subnational NPAs.

B. A revitalized urban basic services strategy

42. The revitalized UBS strategy will consist of four key thrusts within the framework of the NPA and the country programme approach: (a) promotion of the decade goals for children while joining other partners in poverty reduction, (especially to aid working mothers); (b) application of the Agenda 21 concept of PEC in low-income urban areas; (c) support to both rehabilitative and preventive approaches for children in especially difficult circumstances; and (d) advocacy, technical support and applied research for "urban development with a human face". In order to go to scale in the achievement of these goals, efforts will include the development of viable national urban policies; capacity-building for local-level management of sustainable urban development; and improved monitoring and impact analysis with attention to the costs of UBS to both service providers and to households.

Achievement of the decade goals for children and partnerships for poverty alleviation

43. A central feature of urban life is the dependence on a cash economy. The poor are doubly affected - by the need to pay cash for every service and by the opportunity costs of the time needed to utilize the service. Therefore the pursuit of the decade goals for children can have a dual benefit for the urban poor by improving their children's survival, development and protection, while at the same time reducing the economic burden and alleviating poverty. When tied to community participation and capacity-building, the benefits can be lasting and synergistic. UNICEF will work with other partners to attain the decade goals and to launch a broad-based attack on poverty.

44. Preventive health care that does not demand inordinate amounts of time or cash must be provided by combining essential services in an accessible location. It should be a community-based system that uses simply trained workers who are either part-time and voluntary or full-time and paid by some form of charge to the community. Links between these workers and the urban health system must be carefully worked out. Community-based child care in low-income areas needs to be promoted as part of the follow-up to the "baby-friendly" hospital initiative. The nutrition of the young child also calls for specific urban responses, for example, appropriate low-cost weaning foods. Careful use of mass media, Facts for Life and other social communication tools geared to urban life are needed.

45. There is need to develop appropriate alternative, non-formal education approaches if the formal system is not flexible enough to allow poor children to study when their work schedules permit. These approaches could use a condensed curriculum adapted to their particular situation, with a strong vocational component for teenagers. Subsidies or other measures to counteract such hidden costs as uniforms and texts are needed.

46. Other major decade goals, such as support to water supply and sanitation projects and help for children in especially difficult circumstances, are discussed below. In addition to these types of actions, support for credit and work opportunities, especially for working mothers, are necessary and are, in fact, feasible, as indicated by UBS and other experiences (for example, the Self-Employed Women's Association in India).

Primary environmental care

47. The PEC concept is fully in consonance with UBS. By addressing basic needs, PEC reinforces efforts to achieve the decade goals, adding a more explicit concern for environmental improvements and management. Its emphasis on community empowerment is also congruent with UBS principles. By applying the concept of PEC in low-income urban areas, at community and household levels, UNICEF will be helping to implement the objectives of both the World Summit for Children and UNCED.

48. Preventive health care in dense, low-income urban areas must involve environmental factors. Present knowledge and use of low-cost, locally managed technologies in the provision of safe water supply and disposal of solid and liquid waste need wider dissemination, with adaptation to local situations and resources, and in a socio-ecological context. A renewed emphasis on environmentally sustainable practices will lead to both health benefits and savings. For example, communities can hygienically recycle inorganic waste and compost organic garbage, using hand carts; this will provide employment, and the compost can be used in urban agriculture. While some types of urban air pollution can be tackled only by city-wide systems, alternative fuels, improved stoves and planting of trees on a small scale can be promoted, creating both health and economic benefits.

49. Other sectoral aspects of PEC have been mentioned above as part of the efforts to achieve the decade goals for children and to reduce poverty. One of the cross-sectoral issues is the strengthening of the capacity of municipal and national agencies to understand community concerns and dynamics and to respond adequately to them through an enabling, rather than merely a service delivery,

approach. There is scope for collaboration with other agencies on this issue, for instance, with the Urban Management Programme (a joint UNDP/World Bank/HABITAT venture). UNICEF also will need to strengthen its own analytical, planning and programming capabilities related to community empowerment and capacity-building. Staffing, recruitment and training for support to cross-sectoral and empowering approaches need support.

Children in especially difficult circumstances

50. Helping children in especially difficult circumstances is one of the major decade goals and a priority in terms of child protection in urban areas. It is also a means to attack the cycle of poverty and deprivation that often handicaps future generations. Among rehabilitative approaches, community- and street-based actions for support to street children and working children and other children at risk should be a priority in many urban areas. Where centres for counselling and remedial actions are needed, they should be open rather than closed institutions. Given the sensitivity and intense nature of this work, a combined effort by NGOs, the private sector (where many working children are employed) and communities, under the direction of the Government or local municipality, may be the answer. Alternative educational approaches discussed above will help both in preventive and rehabilitative thrusts, as will appropriate low-cost, community-based library, music, sports and cultural activities. UNICEF advocacy for vulnerable urban groups should take into account the serious new problems of emergencies and the resultant displacement of urban populations, the spread of the acquired immune deficiency syndrome and the escalation in the number of children in especially difficult circumstances due to drugs and violence.

"Urban development with a human face"

51. UNICEF vigorous and sustained advocacy of "adjustment with a human face" has been an important factor in modifying approaches to structural adjustment both by international agencies and Governments. This effort has evolved in the 1990s into advocacy and policy support for "development with a human face", which clearly must include urban development. The lessons learned from the impact of macroeconomic, political and social policies on the urban poor argue for an advocacy and technical support role for UNICEF in the development of viable national urban policies, along with other partners concerned with human development and poverty reduction.

52. Such a focus on the urban poor must be set in the context of a balanced urban and rural strategy, in the interests of comprehensive national development. There are several options in this strategy that might succeed in rejuvenating rural economies and managing urbanization, such as regional development, growth centre promotion, small- and medium-town development and urban/town planning; laws and regulations regarding zoning, land tenure in squatter areas and licensing of trade and market facilities; improved mechanisms for access to credit for the urban informal sector; and safety nets and compensatory mechanisms. The major programme thrusts in such a policy should include: support to the systematic review of urban and rural situations and disparities, with special reference to poor children and women; monitoring the impact of economic crises and of structural adjustment programmes on the poor; and targeting the urban and rural poor in all NPAs. This implies working within

the framework of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and Agenda 21; applying lessons learned in community empowerment and capacity-building from UBS and other similar experiences; and adapting national sectoral programmes to ensure they reach the poor.

53. While some of the technical support for such a focus must come from other agencies, UNICEF will need to focus on the perspective of children and women. Such aspects as situation analyses, NPA formulation, implementation and monitoring, capacity-building at various levels and the implementation of programmes that demonstrate the feasibility of these perspectives will need UNICEF support. Also, known problems of female-headed households and the vulnerability of the girl child and women in general must be addressed specifically through advocacy, targeting and empowerment.

54. The imperative to universalize and mainstream UBS approaches to resolve the urgent problems of the urban poor implies that UNICEF will need to channel resources in areas where it has a comparative advantage. Mobilizing additional resources must be explored by forming alliances with other agencies where potential exists for fruitful collaboration; encouraging other agencies and Governments to increase their resources for urban programmes; supporting municipal restructuring of budgets and procedures to implement programmes for the urban poor; and, last but not least, enhancing community resources - financial, human and managerial.

Monitoring, evaluation and costing

55. Monitoring the decade goals requires the disaggregation of data not merely by rural and urban areas, but also by low-income and other urban areas (as in the water supply and sanitation sector). Such disaggregation can be sought in ongoing and planned surveys, censuses and baseline studies and will help in planning and monitoring, as well as in advocacy, for the poor urban child. Reporting on the World Summit follow-up and the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child should have specific references to the situation of the urban child and to intra-urban disparities, when possible. UBS experiences of viable community monitoring systems, as in Guatemala and the Philippines, need to be incorporated universally so that the process, as well as the results, can enhance community capacities and empowerment, improve actions for children and women and fulfil the needs of municipal, national and external agencies. Linkages must be established between community-based, project and national systems.

56. Recently, UNICEF has been engaged in developing appropriate techniques of costing various project inputs, and UBS will need to apply these to its community-based approaches. The costs to both service providers and to families will need to be examined over a period of time, especially in order to lower costs and to extend low-cost approaches in the medium and long term.

57. All actions on behalf of children cannot be taken at the same time. Priorities must be set, taking into account the level of urgency of the problems, the needs of the community, socio-cultural appropriateness, feasibility based on combined resources and capabilities and capacity to sustain benefits gained without external aid. Such determinations must be made at the

country, city or even community level, within the broad objectives of the overall programme.

VII. RECOMMENDATION

58. The Executive Director recommends that the Executive Board approve the following recommendation:

The Executive Board,

Recognizing the magnitude and urgency of the problems of poor urban children and the positive experiences of the UBS strategy, while noting that its capabilities can be further enhanced so as to reach many more children,

Noting that UBS is a composite of programme delivery, empowerment, capacity-building, multisectoral linkages and sustainable technologies and approaches,

1. Endorses a two-pronged approach to problems of the urban poor consisting of an urban focus in various sectoral programmes and a revitalized UBS strategy, with four main thrusts: achievement of national decade goals for children along with a partnership for poverty reduction; action on PEC; attention to children in especially difficult circumstances; and application of the concept of "urban development with a human face";

2. Notes that these four thrusts are in the spirit of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the World Summit for Children and UNCED;

3. Urges all countries to address the needs of poor urban children through their NPAs, the follow-up to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Agenda 21, along the lines described above;

4. Urges UNICEF to support developing countries in their efforts to do so through country programmes, situation analyses and updates, advocacy, monitoring and evaluation.

Notes

1/ United Nations Population Division, World Urbanization Prospects 1992 (New York, 1992), table A.1, p. 106, table A.5, pp. 154-159.

2/ Ibid., table A.11, pp. 187-194.

3/ United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report 1990 (New York, 1992), pp. 85-86.

4/ United Nations, Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, A/CONF.151/26, vol. I), Agenda 21, para. 6.32.

5/ Human Development Report, op. cit., p. 86.

6/ World Health Organization, Spotlight on the Cities: Improving Urban Health in Developing Countries (Geneva, 1989), p. 64.

7/ World Health Organization, Urbanization and Its Implications for Child Health: Potential for Action (Geneva, 1988), p. 27.

8/ Bangladesh: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 1991 Statistical Yearbook of Bangladesh; Guatemala: unpublished data from UNICEF Guatemala office, 1990; Karachi: study by Agha Khan University students (unpublished), quoted in Trudy Harpham et al. (eds.), In the Shadow of the City: Community Health and the Urban Poor (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 20; Managua: unpublished data from UNICEF Guatemala office, 1990; Port-au-Prince: WHO, Urbanization and its Implications for Child Health (Geneva, 1988), p. 20; Porto Alegre: J. J. Guimares and A. Fischman, "Inequalities in 1980 Infant Mortality among Shanty Town Residents and Non-Shanty Town Residents in the Municipalities of Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil", Bulletin of the Pan American Health Organization, 19 (3), 1985, pp. 235-251; national IMRs: UNICEF, State of the World's Children (New York, 1985-1991).

9/ WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme, Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Monitoring Report 1990 (Baseline Year) (New York, November 1992), p. 12.

10/ Spotlight on the Cities, op. cit., p. 123.

11/ UNICEF, UNICEF Cooperation with Municipal Governments (New York, January 1992), p. 20; UNICEF, Reaching Summit Goals in Urban Areas: New Means and New Partnerships, Urban Examples, No. 18, 12 October 1992, p. 19.

12/ Bernt Aasen and A. Macrea, The Tegucigalpa Model: Water and Sanitation through Community Management, prepared for WATSAN Section, UNICEF (New York, 1990).

13/ UNICEF Cooperation with Municipal Governments, op. cit., pp. 19-23.

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